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CS 652 Ethics of Hospitality and Contemporary Challenges

Christine Pohl

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CS 652: Ethics of Hospitality and Contemporary Challenges
Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring 2003
Tuesdays, 6:15-9:00pm**M302**

Dr. Christine Pohl, Professor
Office Location: Estes 106
Office Phone 858-2284***Home Phone 858-8136
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 12:30-3:00pm and by appointment

Purpose: To introduce students to the Christian tradition of offering hospitality to strangers and to enable students to use that moral framework in developing a pastoral response to contemporary issues of diversity and inclusion in church and society.

Learning Objectives:

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and critically engage with:
 - Biblical texts on hospitality
 - Various historical practices of hospitality in the church
 - Contemporary practices and theoretical discussions of hospitality.
2. Recognize and reflect on the tensions between maintaining a distinctive Christian identity and welcoming strangers.
3. Articulate a theology and practice of hospitality that addresses issues of cultural diversity, race relations, homelessness, refugees, migrant workers, and persons with disabilities.
4. Recognize the difficulties, limitations, and challenges of Christian hospitality.

Texts:

Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*. NY: HarperCollins, 1979, 1994.
Christine Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*.
Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999
Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1996.
Reading Packet

Bernard Adeney, *Strange Virtues: Ethics in a Multicultural World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
Henri Nouwen, *Reaching Out*, NY: Doubleday.
Brett Webb-Mitchell, *Unexpected Guests at God's Banquet: Welcoming People with Disabilities into the Church*. NY: Crossroad, 1994.

Other readings will be on reserve in the library.

Evaluation:

Paper #1: Letter to main character in <i>Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed</i>	5%
Paper #2: Devotional on Welcoming Strangers	15%
Paper #3: Paper on Theology of Welcome	20%
Paper #4: Immersion and Reflection	15%
Paper #5: Research Paper or Project	35%
Class participation and readings	10%

Grade Range: Work for CS 652 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A = (4.0) Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives

B = (3.0) Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives

C = (2.0) Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives

D = (1.0) Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives

F = (0) Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Student Responsibilities: This course is designed as a seminar. It is therefore essential that students come to class having read the assigned material carefully and critically. Class attendance and active participation in discussions are expected and are factored into the final grade. Reading Records will be collected on the last day of class.

All written work must be typed with 12-point type, one inch margins on all four sides, and (except for the first assignment) true double-spacing. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse. Papers are due in class on assigned date.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision

Assignments involve four brief integrative/reflection papers and a research paper or project.

1. Due **February 18:** Write a one-page (single-spaced) letter to one of the main characters in *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*. Reflect on how the testimony of his or her hospitality and community challenged you morally and spiritually. Be specific in engaging one or two incidents or insights that were particularly important to you.

2. Due **March 11:** A coalition of churches in your town is thinking about responding to the latest refugee crisis by assisting in the resettlement of several families. There is mixed response within the congregations—some parishioners are very supportive; others

remain unconvinced. The pastors in town have asked you to do a devotional on “Welcoming Strangers.” Leaning heavily on the biblical and historical materials we have covered over the past three weeks, write a devotional that would help parishioners understand the biblical and moral importance of offering hospitality to needy strangers. (3 pages, double-spaced).

3. Due **April 15:** Write a three page (double-spaced) paper that articulates a theology of welcome. Integrate the material from Miroslav Volf’s *Exclusion and Embrace* with the other readings and class discussions. (*More specific instructions for this assignment will be provided*)

4. Due **May 6:** Immersion and Reflection – spend 3-5 hours in a place that cares for the needs of strangers. If possible, help out with the tasks. Be careful to observe as much as possible about guest/host relations, power and empowerment, setting, and explicit and implicit messages about welcome and respect. Write a 3 page (double-spaced) paper reflecting on your experience in light of some of the key themes we have covered in class.

5. Due **May 20:** Final Project – to be developed in individual consultation with the professor (15 pages, double-spaced). Three general types of papers/projects are possible:

1. Research paper on ministry with a vulnerable population: homeless people, migrant workers, people with disabilities or terminal illnesses, refugees. (*More specific instructions will be provided*)
2. Develop a curriculum for use in the local church, student work, or youth ministries using hospitality as a framework for moral formation. Be specific about objectives for the curriculum and how you expect to accomplish moral formation. Make sure to attend to cognitive, affective, and community-building dimensions.
3. Research paper on the moral implications of hospitality for missions practice and missionaries. (*More specific instructions will be provided*)

Class Sessions and Assignments

February 11: Hospitality to Strangers: A Window into the Moral Life

Images, themes, questions, and introductions

February 18: Hospitality as Part of the Moral Life

Discussion of the hospitality of the community of Le Chambon

Reading Assignment: *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*

Written Assignment #1: Letter to character in the story

February 25: Biblical Sources for the Hospitality Tradition

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 3-35
Packet- Biblical Texts and pages 1-34

March 4: An Overview of the Ancient Tradition

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 36-58
Packet – pages 35-83

March 11: Hospitality as Recognition and Respect

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 61-103
Packet – pages 84-90, 98-119
Written Assignment #2: Devotional on Welcoming Strangers

March 18: Marginality, Power, Possessions, and Places

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 104-24, 150-69
Packet - pages 120-182
Nouwen, *Reaching Out*: chapters 4-6

March 25: Hospitality, Community, Boundaries, and Limits

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 127-49
Packet - pages 91-97, 103-109, 161-170

April 1: Hospitality, Community, Boundaries, and Limits (continued)

April 8: READING WEEK

April 15: Developing a Moral Theology of Hospitality

Reading Assignment: *Exclusion and Embrace*, 13-165
Written Assignment #3: Paper on Theology of Welcome

April 22: Application: Welcoming People with Disabilities

Reading Assignment: Webb-Mitchell, *Unexpected Guests*, 1-13, 46-49, 71-109, 130-155, 170-184
Materials on reserve in library

April 29: Application: Hospitality and Cross-cultural or Multiethnic Ministry

Reading Assignment: Adeney, *Strange Virtues*, 13-141, 163-191
Materials on reserve in library
Review A. Gittins and Riggins Earl in packet

May 6: Application: Implications for Pastoral Ministry in Local Churches

Reading Assignment: Packet – pages 171-204
Written Assignment #4: Immersion and Reflection Paper

**May 13: Application: Implications for Christian Presence in the World....
Nurturing a Difficult Practice**

Reading Assignment: *Making Room*, 170-187
Packet - pages 205-216

May 20: Finals Week

Written Assignment #5: Final Research Project